



SR-99 North Corridor Study

Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #5

August 19, 2002

Draft - Meeting Summary

Agenda

- I. Welcome – Nytasha Sowers, WSDOT**
- II. Review Status of Preliminary Recommendations –
WSDOT, City of Seattle, King County Metro**
- III. Public Involvement Update – Renee Zimmerman,
WSDOT**
- IV. Adjourn**

Next SAC Meeting – November 18, 2002

Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church
Tree of Life Room
7-9 pm

Stakeholder Advisory Committee members present:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Warren Aakervik, Jr.
Ballard Intermodal North
Manufacturing Industrial
Center (BINMIC) | <input type="checkbox"/> Paulette Gust , Citizen
and transit rider | <input type="checkbox"/> Jerry Owens
Aurora – Licton Springs
Planning Group |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hall
Broadview/Bitter
Lake/Haller Lake
Community Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Sheck
Weaving Wallingford |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Susie Burke
Fremont Neighborhood
WORKS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clarice Keegan (Alt.)
Aurora Ave. Merchants
Assn. | <input type="checkbox"/> Marty Spiegel
Greenwood/Phinney
Community Council |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Coney
Transportation Chair
Uptown/Queen Anne –
Uptown Alliance | <input type="checkbox"/> Ref Lindmark
Green Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Sundborg (Alt)
Uptown/Queen Anne –
Uptown Alliance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jo Dawson
Broadview/Bitter
Lake/Haller Lake
Community Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Sue Linnabary (Alt)
Haller Lake Land Use | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barbara Van Defen
Bicycle Advisory Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mike Foley , Transportation
Chair
South Lake Union Planning
Committee | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris MacKenzie
Weaving Wallingford | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faye Garneau
Aurora Ave. Merchants
Assn. | <input type="checkbox"/> James Mueller
Vulcan NW | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tony Gomez (Alt)
King County Traffic Safety
Coalition | <input type="checkbox"/> Roy Nelson (Alt)
South Lake Union
Planning Committee | |

Staff, Observers and Interested Parties

Dave Boyd, Dept. of Neighborhoods
Michael McGinn, Greenwood Community
Council

SR 99 North Steering Committee

Rich Meredith, SDOT
Ellen Bevington, King County Metro
Karl Westby, HDR
Therese Casper, SDOT
Nytasha Sowers, WSDOT
Renee Zimmerman, WSDOT
Fen Hsiao, PRR

The following summarizes presentations given, issues raised, actions undertaken or recommendations made. When possible, lengthy discussions have been summarized into themes or summary statements.

I. WELCOME

Nytasha Sowers, WSDOT, began the meeting at 7:05 p.m. She thanked the committee members for attending. She reviewed the scope and schedule for the study.

Ms. Sowers said staff has been working with the community and business groups and have a draft of the corridor improvement recommendations to be presented at the upcoming open house. She said staff is presenting the proposed improvements to the SAC first to collect comments and feedback.

Suzie Burke, Fremont Neighborhood WORKS, asked what the cost of the improvements would be. Ms. Sowers said staff does not know what the cost will be because the improvements haven't been decided on yet.

Key Items:

- **The SR 99 North Corridor Study Steering Committee has developed the proposed corridor safety and mobility improvements. The improvements will be presented at the upcoming open house in October 2002.**

II. REVIEW STATUS OF PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The group moved into the Fellowship Hall to review the recommended corridor improvements that were displayed around the room.

South Focus Area – North end of Battery St. Tunnel to N. 50th St.

S. Focus Area - North end of Battery St. to Aurora Bridge

Karl Westby, HDR, presented an overview of the proposed reconfiguration of the seven leg intersection immediately west of the Raye Street exit off SR 99, the relocation of the Raye Street southbound exit to Dexter Street, and a new deceleration ramp for the Halladay exit along with reconfiguration of the Halladay Street exit.

Mr. Coney asked where the additional width would come from for the proposed improvements. Mr. Westby said the improvements that call for more width are long-term actions that would be constructed in conjunction with property redevelopment.

Barbara Van Defen, Bicycle Advisory Board, said the proposed relocation of the southbound Raye Street exit to Dexter Street would involve a long detour. Is there another alternative to this?

Mr. Coney asked what changes would be made to Dexter Avenue North. Mr. Westby said Dexter will still be two lanes and will have traffic signals.

Ms. Van Defen asked if there is another form of traffic signalization on Dexter and 6th Avenue North that better prioritizes traffic? Mr. Westby said signal control is the most efficient means of prioritizing traffic when there are high traffic volumes.

Mr. Coney asked how the recommendations would affect backups on Dexter. Mr. Westby said analysis does not show significant backup during peak hours.

Ms. Van Defen said bicyclists riding in the parking lane are forced to ride into traffic when trying to avoid opening car doors. Mr. Westby said this issue has not been looked at in detail, but would be in the design of such a project. He said some parking might be eliminated to accommodate bicyclists. Ms. Van Defen said some parking should be decreased in order to increase bike lane width and safety.

Mr. Coney said the most urgent need in this section of the corridor is to fix the Queen Anne Drive seen leg intersection west of Raye Street. He said this should be used as a non-rush hour option to turning off SR 99 onto Raye St. Mr. Westby said this might be problematic because time restrictions tend to confuse people.

Mr. Coney asked if a new off-ramp could be constructed at Raye Street. Mr. Westby said this would be too problematic due to the current bridge design.

Mr. Coney said there is a great deal of cut-thru traffic using Queen Anne to get to Seattle Center during games. Mr. Westby said the proposed improvements might improve this situation.

Mr. Coney asked if there are any access changes being made south of SR 99. Mr. Westby said there are proposed changes by the Viaduct as well as the Galer St. overpass.

S. Focus Area - Aurora Bridge

Rich Meredith, SDOT, provided an overview of the proposed improvements to the Aurora Bridge.

Ms. Burke said the neighborhoods were hoping to use the Aurora Bridge as an alternative during the construction of the Fremont Bridge Approach Project. Ms. Sowers said the Aurora Bridge improvements are long term and would not coincide with the Fremont Bridge Project.

Warren Aakervik, BINMIC, asked if one, suspended pedestrian walkway, instead of two, is an option. Mr. Meredith said this presents an access problem.

Mr. Coney asked if a pedestrian walkway down the middle of the bridge is an option. Mr. Meredith said no.

Ms. Van Defen asked if security issues are addressed with the pedestrian tunnel recommendation. Mr. Meredith said emergency access is available per current design standards. Emergency vehicles would be able to access the tunnel. Mr. Meredith said full examination of safety options would be included in the next study phase.

Mr. Coney asked if the proposed relocation of the pedestrian facility under the bridge deck would be better or worse as a suicide hazard. Mr. Meredith said it would be better because it would be enclosed. He said this would apply towards potential demonstrators, too.

S. Focus Area – Bridge Way/ N. 38th St. , N. 38th St. Northbound Access

Mr. Meredith provided an overview of the proposed improvements at the North 38th St. / Bridge Way N. intersection, and north bound access improvements onto SR 99 from N. 38th Street.

Ms. Burke said the area on Bridge Way around the 38th/Aurora intersection would not be improved by the recommended enhancements. She said it's essential to make the Bridge Way ramp to SR 99 useful. A lane is needed for acceleration onto SR 99 from 38th. Mr. Meredith said Mr. Burke's comments are noted.

Mr. Meredith said there would not be any parking northbound from 38th to 50th. Ms. Burke said northbound parking needs to be accessible and people need to be able to park safely.

Ms. Burke said signage along SR 99 should be improved. She said that when motorists overshoot the turn off they have to drive all the way down to Dexter before they can turn around. She said the Fremont sign needs to be reinstalled. She said the signage is not visible along this whole area. The sign needs to say "38th St. – Fremont". She noted that she has previously made this same request.

Mr. Coney asked if the recommendations would help accommodate the proposed bus service increase. Mr. Meredith said it would help the express buses.

Key Items:

- Staff reviewed proposed area improvements.

SAC Comments/Requests

- Shoulder parking should be decreased in order to increase bike lane width for safety
- The most urgent need is to fix the Queen Anne Dr. seven leg intersection west of the Raye Street exit
- The pedestrian walkway needs to examine all safety options, including emergency access, suicide hazards, etc.
- Essential to make Bridge Way N. ramp to SR 99 useful. An acceleration lane is needed onto SR 99 from N. 38th St.
- Fremont signage on SR 99 needs to be improved/reinstalled

WSDOT & SDOT Action Items

- Reinstall Fremont signage per Ms. Burke's repeated requests
- Examine all safety concerns regarding proposed Aurora Bridge pedestrian walkway

Central Area – N. 50th St. to 110th St.

Mr. Meredith provided an overview of the proposed cross-sections from N. 50th to N. 59th Street through the Woodland Park Zoo. Mr. Meredith explained that staff is

looking at the following three different options/or combination of these options for relocating the sidewalk when the roadway is widened:

- Pedestrian tunnels
- Pedestrian ramps
- Park trails

Regarding the park ramps option, Ms. Garneau said that safety is not good in this area due to shrubbery and lack of visibility. Mr. Meredith said the improvements would improve visibility with lighting and other steps. He said study staff would be meeting with parks staff soon to discuss options.

Regarding the park trail option, Ms. Keegan asked how pedestrians would get to the overpass? Mr. Meredith said they would utilize existing trails.

Mr. Meredith noted there is no funding identified for any of the alternatives yet.

Ms. Van Defen said the park trails option is favorable because the grades are constant and good for ADA. Mr. Meredith said they might maximize one side of the road for better bike and pedestrian access.

Mr. Meredith said study staff might come up with an option that incorporates parts of all three options.

Mr. Aakervik said they need to put a signalized pedestrian crossing somewhere in this area. Mr. Meredith said study staff wants to, but the recommendation first has to meet the signal warrant.

Mr. Meredith provided an overview the left turn restrictions at accident hot spots, parking restrictions, and signal improvements proposed in the central focus area.

Ms. Garneau said there is no consideration for left turns south bound at Winona into the Green Lake neighborhood. She suggested taking the left turn option away from 77th for this. Mr. Meredith said staff is looking into this issue.

Michael McGinn, Greenwood Community Council, said the proposed light at 95th would encourage cut-throughs. Mr. Meredith said it wouldn't encourage cut-thrus if it were a half signal. He said staff is trying to balance the needs between accidents and turning motorists.

Mr. McGinn asked if they should eliminate the left-turn pocket? Mr. Meredith said they plan to restrict left-hand turns between 85th and 87th northbound.

Mr. McGinn asked if a traffic study has been done to look at turning movements at 90th. Mr. Meredith said staff would look into it.

Ms. Keegan said p.m. parking restrictions southbound would put businesses out of business.

Ms. Garneau said that if these restrictions were implemented, the AAMA would sue. She said customers will not park at off-site parking and that it is not a pedestrian neighborhood.

Mr. Meredith said although there is talk about decreasing street parking, it would probably be replaced with new parking right next to the current parking sites and with better signage.

She said the AAMA also does not support dedicated bus lanes on SR 99.

Ms. Sowers said parking restrictions from N. 110th St. to N. 70th St. would not be for a dedicated bus lane instead they would be for general-purpose traffic and would provide three travel lanes during the p.m. peak periods.

Ms. Garneau said the problem isn't traffic; it's the traffic lights, especially at 90th. She said the intersection at 90th isn't properly controlled with signals. She said it needs to have traffic controls for turning.

Mr. McGinn suggested incorporating a turn signal or control at 90th.

Ms. Garneau said eliminating shoulder parking for southbound traffic lanes is a bad move. She emphasized that SR 99 only has one bus route. She said this action would destroy businesses. Ms. Garneau asked if the study already has money to increase transit. If not, she said, the study shouldn't take away parking.

Mr. Coney argued that Aurora businesses are anti-transit. However, he said, transit is the future of transportation and the area needs to provide for major bus stops.

Mr. Aakervik asked if the study can help businesses establish their own parking.

Key Items:

- **Staff reviewed three proposed improvement options.**

SAC Comments/Requests

- **Ensure safety thru visibility along this section of the corridor**
- **The Trail option for the relocation of the sidewalk through Woodland Park is preferred by bicyclists due to constant grades**
- **Install a signalized pedestrian crossing somewhere in this section**
- **Install a left turn signal south bound at Winona into the Green Lake neighborhood**
- **Do not apply p.m. parking restrictions to roadside parking.**
- **Examine the turning movements at 90th and signal improvements**

WSDOT & SDOT Action Items

- **Reinstall Fremont signage per Ms. Burke's repeated requests**
- **Look into the installation of a left turn signal south bound at Winona into Greenlake.**
- **Examine the turning movements at 90th and signal improvements**

North Focus Area – N. 110th St. to N. 145th St.

Mr. Coney asked if the shoulder would be used for the new BAT lane. Ms. Sowers said the proposed BAT lane would be built into the existing southbound shoulder.

Mr. Coney said the improvements would be adding more moving vehicles to the roadway. Will there be any additional pedestrian refuge? Ms. Sowers said there would be a new pedestrian crossing at 140th and more sidewalks in other areas along the corridor.

Ms. Keegan asked what staff will do if traffic accidents increase as a result of BAT lanes. Ms. Sowers noted that since carpools were removed from the BAT lanes, the number of accidents has decreased. Ms. Sowers said if accidents increased the study would make recommendation based on the pattern of accidents, recommendation will likely include increasing BAT lane enforcement and improving signage.

Mr. Coney said there is a need for more pedestrian refuge. He also said he thinks BAT lanes will destroy businesses. Ms. Sowers said a pedestrian refuge at 140th has been proposed.

Mr. Coney said the Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board thinks the speed limit isn't appropriate and do not want lanes widened. He said they need to control traffic instead. He said he isn't suggesting they decrease the speed limit, they just need to better enforce it. Ms. Sowers acknowledged the need for better enforcement and said the narrow lanes encourage sideswipes. She noted the lanes are narrower than WSDOT typically prefers for safety reasons.

Key Items:

- **Staff reviewed proposed improvements.**

SAC Comments/Requests

- **There is a need for more pedestrian refuge**
- **BAT lanes will destroy businesses along SR 99**
- **Need better enforcement of traffic speed.**

III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Ms. Zimmerman took over the meeting's lead to discuss upcoming public involvement for the study.

Ms. Zimmerman encouraged SAC members to schedule and attend community briefings. She said the next project open house is October 24, 5-8 PM at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall. The next SAC meeting is November 18 at the Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church, Tree of Life Room, 7-9 PM. Both events will be held at tonight's meeting location – Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church/Tree of Life Room.

Ms. Zimmerman advised members to send any comments regarding tonight's meeting to WSDOT by the end of September.

Key Items:

- **Next study open house is on October 24**
- **Next SAC meeting is on November 18**

- Meeting comments need to be submitted to WSDOT by end of September

V. ADJOURN

Ms. Sowers adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.